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The Australian Ecolabel Program

Australian Voluntary Environmental Labelling Standard

General Purpose Cleaners



ISSUED BY GOOD ENVIRONMENTAL CHOICE AUSTRALIA
PO BOX 4140, WESTON CREEK, ACT 2606
PHONE: +61 (02) 6287 3100
FAX: +61 (02) 6287 3800
E-MAIL: OFFICE@GECA.ORG.AU

Use of This Standard

This voluntary environmental labelling standard may be used by competent environmental assessors to establish product compliance to the Australian Ecolabel Program. Products that are certified with the mark of conformity, the "Environmental Choice Label" have been independently tested and demonstrate compliance to the environmental and social performance criteria detailed in this standard. The overall goal of environmental labels and declarations is, through communication of verifiable and accurate information that is not misleading, on environmental aspects of products and services, to encourage the demand for and supply of those products and services that cause less stress on the environment, thereby stimulating the potential for market-driven continuous environmental improvement.

This standard identifies environmental, quality, regulatory and social performance criteria that products sold on the Australian market can meet in order to be considered as best "environment practice". Products that have been certified as complying to this standard may gain greater market recognition and a marketing advantage in government and business procurement programs and broad consumer environmental preference.

This standard can be used by Australian producers to guide their design for environment programs by using the environmental criteria as key performance benchmarks that reduce the environmental loads of their product. The standard is necessarily restricted in its identification of environmental loads from the product life cycle. Producers should consider other environmental improvement along the product cycle not included in this standard for their design for environment programs and aim for even higher levels of environmental performance where technically possible.

For further information please contact:

Good Environmental Choice Australia.
Standards Review and Development
E-mail: standards@geca.org.au

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Good Environmental Choice Australia.
PO Box 4140, Weston Creek, ACT 2606 Australia.
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Voluntary Environmental Labelling Standard

General Purpose Cleaning Products

Abstract

This Standard specifies environmental performance requirements of a range of general purpose cleaning products for the Australian Ecolabel Program. The program generally complies with ISO 14024: "Environmental labels and declarations - Guiding principles" which requires environmental labelling specifications to include criteria that are objective, reasonable and verifiable.

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Date Published: 1 January 2006

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Definitions:

"APEO" means alkylphenol ethoxylate.

"AS" means Australian Standard.

"ASTM" means American Society for Testing and Materials.

"Builder" means any substance intended to maintain alkalinity, and/or bind calcium and magnesium ions (soften the water), and/or keep the soil in suspension, increasing the effectiveness of the detergent. It includes substances such as phosphates, NTA, EDTA, zeolites, sodium citrate, sodium silicate and sodium carbonate.

"Carcinogenic" means capable of causing cancer.

"EDTA" means ethylene diamine-tetra-acetic acid or ethylene dinitrilo-tetra-acetic acid or any of its salts.

"Formulated or manufactured with" refers to the preparation of the cleaner and not to the preparation of the components of the detergent unless the components are specifically mentioned in the product specific requirements. Residual or un-reacted components are covered by the product specific requirements.

"Fragrance & Colouring" means organic substances that are added primarily for aesthetic reasons to give colour and smell. Fragrance can also conceal smells from other ingredients and from the washing up itself.

"General Purpose Cleaners" means any cleaner designed to perform on a variety of hard surfaces for household, institutional and/or recreational purposes. It excludes institutional cleaners intended for use in certain situations where a highly germicidal action is required, such as in hospital and food processing areas.

"ISO" means International Organisation for Standardisation.

"Label" means the Environmental Choice Australia Label.

"NTA" means nitrilotriacetic acid or any of its salts.

“OECD” means Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

“pH” is a scale of numbers indicating how acidic or alkaline water is. A pH of 7 is neutral, higher pH values are progressively more alkaline and lower pH values are progressively more acidic.

“Readily biodegradable” surfactants are those where the average level of biodegradation observed in an aerobic sewage treatment plant is at least 90% during a residence time of not more than 3 hours. In order to meet this requirement the surfactant must either meet the requirement for ready biodegradability when determined using any of the following test methods including the OECD Guidelines for Testing of Chemicals, Test Guidelines 301A-301E, ISO 7827 (1994), AS 4351 (part 2 - 1996) or achieve a biodegradability of at least 80% when tested by the OECD method, published in the OECD technical report of 11 June 1976 on the Proposed Method for the Determination of the Biodegradability of Surfactants used in Synthetic Detergents. The pass level of 80% recognises the inherent experimental variability of the OECD test.

“Solvent” is a general term for a chemically diverse range of liquid substances which dissolve other materials.

“Surfactant” or “surface-active agent” means any substance which is intended to reduce surface tension thereby helping water to surround and remove soils from surfaces.

1.0 Background

The primary function of general purpose cleaners is to remove soils from hard surfaces. Millions of kilograms of general purpose cleaners are consumed in Australia each year. This represents a potentially significant burden on the environment in terms of wastewater loading and subsequent treatment, emissions of volatile organic compounds (VOC's), resource consumption and disposal of packaging materials.

The major active components in general purpose cleaners are surfactants, builders, solvents and scouring abrasives. Components, such as surfactants, may accumulate and may be toxic or otherwise harmful in the environment. Surfactants provide a significant load on sewage systems.

Builders serve to overcome water hardness and improve surfactant performance. Phosphate and nitrilotriacetic acid (NTA) are commonly used builders.

Phosphate may be a limiting nutrient in some aquatic environments and in some other countries the use of phosphate in detergents has been discouraged to prevent unsustainable plant growth and oxygen starvation (eutrophication) of lakes and waterways. In Australian waters, the contribution of phosphate from agricultural and forested land usually outweighs that from sewage however for local area waste water management systems phosphate free detergents can reduce nutrient availability for unsustainable plant growth and oxygen starvation (eutrophication).

Although NTA is an efficient builder, it may influence the mobility of heavy metals in aquatic environments.

Solvents are used either to assist in the cleaning action or to provide solvency for other ingredients. The most widely used solvent is water; however organic solvents may also be included. Volatile organic compound (VOC) emissions from all purpose cleaners are fairly significant in comparison to other household products. These VOC's react with nitrogen oxides (NOx) in the presence of sunlight to produce ground level ozone and photochemical smog. Reducing VOC emissions will thus improve air quality.

To reduce environmental and health impacts, components of general purpose cleaners should either be environmentally innocuous or should readily biodegrade, and the products of degradation should not pose an increased risk to the environment.

Based on a review of currently available information, the following product category requirements will produce environmental benefits by reducing water pollution by reducing the volume of total chemicals used in the products and by limiting the use of (VOC's) and potentially hazardous ingredients, conserving transport and energy and by minimising waste production by reducing the amount of primary packaging. As information and technology change, product category requirements will be reviewed, updated and possibly amended.

2.0 Product Category Scope

This category includes all general purpose cleaners.

3.0 Environmental Performance Criteria

3.1 Fitness for Purpose

Certified products should be good performers in their intended application. It is implied that certain standards of product performance are implicit in the label. Certified product must ensure that the product is fit for its intended purpose and where relevant:

- 3.1.1 The product meets the performance requirements of the relevant Australian Standard for its intended application; or
- 3.1.2 The product meets any other internationally accepted standard if it is to be exported;
- 3.1.3 The general purpose cleaner must clean common hard surfaces effectively as measured by a method based on CAN/CGSB-2-GP-11, Method 20.3, Methods of Testing and Analysis of Soaps and Detergents: Cleaning Efficiency and/or equivalent.

3.2 Formulation Requirements

The phosphorous load shall not exceed 25 mg/litre.

General purpose cleaners shall not be formulated or manufactured with:

- EDTA;
 - NTA;
 - APEO's;
 - reactive chlorine compounds such as hypochlorite or organic chlorine carriers;
 - substances classified as carcinogenic according to the approved criteria for the classification of hazardous substances by the National Industry Chemical Notification and Assessment Scheme;
 - greater than 0.1% of any ingredient that is classified or may be classified as mutagenic or tetragenic according to the approved criteria for the classification of hazardous substances by the National Industry Chemical Notification and Assessment Scheme;
-

- greater than 1% of any ingredient that is classified as a contact sensitiser or as a possible mutagen according to the approved criteria for the classification of hazardous substances by the National Industry Chemical Notification and Assessment Scheme;

3.3 Solvents

General purpose cleaners must not contain:

a) Halogenated organic solvents or butoxy-ethanol;

b) volatile organic compounds in excess of 10% by weight as measured by EPA Method 24-24A, 40 C.F.R., Part 60, Appendix A (1991), or Method 18,48 Federal Register 48, no. 202, October 18, 1983 or Method 1400 NIOSH Manual of Analytical Methods, Volume 1, February 1984, or EPA Method 8240 GC/MS Method for Volatile Organics, September 1986 or as demonstrated through calculation from records of the amounts of constituents used to make the product. For product for which the label specifies dilution with water prior to use, the VOC limit shall apply only after the minimum specified dilution has taken place. The minimum specified dilution shall not include recommendations for the incidental use of a concentrated product to deal with limited special applications, such as hard to remove soils and stains.

3.4 Fragrance

Fragrance must be produced and used in accordance with the "Code of Practice" compiled by the International Fragrance Association (IFRA).

Fragrance containing the following musk compounds must not be used because of their cancer risk:

Common Name	CAS-No
Moskusxylene	81-15-2
Moskusambrette	83-66-9
Moskene	116-66-5
Moskustibetin	145-39-1
Moskusetone	81-14-1

3.5 Colours

Colorants used must be included on the "List of Colouring Agents Allowed for use in Cosmetic Products" in Annex IV of European Commission Directorate 76/768/EEC. A copy of the Directive is available at:

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/cosmetics/html/consolidated_dir.htm

3.6 Consumer Information

- a) The detergents must be accompanied by instructions for proper use so as to maximise product performance and minimise waste.
- b) All detergents must display on the container a list of product ingredients which complies with the requirements of the EEC Commission Recommendation for Labelling of Detergents and Cleaning Products.

3.7 Packaging Requirements

- All plastic containers and plastic components must be made of plastic that are recycled in Australia (or the country to which the product is exported and sold).
- Packaging must not be impregnated, labelled, coated or otherwise treated in a manner, which would prevent recycling (i.e. PVC sleeves, metallic labels).
- All plastic packaging (i.e. container, cap, measuring device) must have a plastic resin identification code clearly visible on each item.
- Packaging (including labels) must not contain PVC or any type of chlorinated materials.
- The cardboard packaging shall consist of $\geq 70\%$ recycled material.

3.8 Compliance to Environmental Regulations

The applicant is required to comply with relevant environmental legislation and government orders at the Local, State and Commonwealth level, if these have been issued. An applicant's compliance with this criterion may be established by undertaking a series of random checks and gathering samples of applicant operational procedures and documents by approved assessors as evidence to support compliance during the verification and /or a statement of self declaration by an executive officer of the applicant organisation. Where an applicant is from an overseas jurisdiction, that jurisdictions environmental regulations apply.

3.9 Compliance to Labour, Anti-Discrimination and Safety Regulations

An applicant shall demonstrate that all employees are covered by a Federal or State award or a certified industrial agreement or a registered workplace agreement as determined by the Industrial Relations Commission, the Employment Advocate or a State or Territory Workplace Relations Agency.

An applicant shall demonstrate general compliance to the terms of State or Territory Legislation concerning Occupational, Health and Safety and/or the *Commonwealth Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988* where applicable. Where the applicant is subject to a breach order by a government agency or a guilty verdict by an Australian Court within the last 24 months on the basis of a breach of State, Territory or Commonwealth Occupational, Health and Safety Legislation there must be evidence of corrective action.

The applicant shall demonstrate general compliance to the requirements of the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975*, *Sex Discrimination Act 1984*, *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*, *Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act 1999* and complementary State Legislation. Applicants cannot be in the list of 'named' or non-compliant employers under the *Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act 1999*. Where the applicant is subject to a breach order by a government agency or a guilty verdict by an Australian Court in the last 24 months on the basis of a breach of these Acts there must be evidence of corrective action.

Where an applicant is from an overseas jurisdiction, the applicant shall demonstrate general compliance to that jurisdictions anti-discrimination, occupational health and safety and workers compensations regulations. Where the applicant is subject to a breach order by a government agency or a guilty verdict by a legal court in their respective country within the last 24 months on the basis of a the breach of anti-discrimination, occupational health and safety and workers compensations regulations there must be evidence of corrective action.

An applicant's compliance with these criteria may be established by undertaking a series of random checks and gathering samples of applicant operational procedures and documents by approved assessors as evidence to support compliance during the verification and /or a statement of self declaration by an executive officer of the applicant organisation.

4.0 Compliance Testing

Conformance with this standard shall be demonstrated by undertaking an assessment to the above criteria by an approved assessor following the certification and verification procedures detailed in Good Environmental Choice Australia Documented Quality Management System which generally follows the environmental auditing requirements of ISO 14 011 and 14 012.

The Australian Ecolabel Program classifies approved assessors as:

1. Assessors registered by Good Environmental Choice Australia as environmental professionals that hold expertise relevant for an assessment and which have undertaken training in the procedures of the Australian Ecolabel Program, or
2. Environmental auditors accredited with the Quality Society of Australasia; or
3. Assessors registered with the Environmental Choice New Zealand Trust.

New testing shall be undertaken by a laboratory accredited by the National Association of Testing Authorities (NATA) or similar overseas accreditation to carry out the relevant tests and/or documentation detailing environmental performance against the key indicators for this standard. The tests results should be presented on NATA endorsed reports or from a laboratory acceptable to Good Environmental Choice Australia.

Audit evidence should be of such a quality and quantity that competent environmental auditors working independently of each other will reach similar audit findings from evaluation of the same audit evidence against the same audit criteria

Suitable sources of information to establish compliance may be but are not limited to:

- 1) Technical specification of the product.
- 2) Obvious characteristics of the product from examination.
- 3) Scientific and test results and reports.
- 4) Environmental management system and audit reports and results.
- 5) Life cycle assessment of each stage of the product life cycle via a physical audit and examination.
- 6) Life cycle assessment via scientific testing.
- 7) A statement of confirmation by an executive officer.
- 8) An assessment of company or government records.
- 9) Other material that can be considered objective evidence.

If testing results or environmental auditing results are not available, and/or there is not sufficient data to establish full compliance to the criteria required by this standard then certification cannot be awarded.

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Consolidated version of Cosmetics Directive 76/768/EEC

Please find the consolidated text of the Cosmetics Directive here:

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☐

Consolidation entails the integration of basic instruments of Community legislation, their amendments and corrections in a single, non-official document. The consolidated version is intended for use as a documentation tool and the Institutions do not assume any liability for its content. The most recent adaptations may not yet be laboured into the consolidated version.

Technical adaptations to be laboured into the consolidated text

Commission Directive 2007/22/EC of 17 April 2007 amending Council Directive 76/768/EEC, concerning cosmetic products, for the purposes of adapting Annexes IV and VI thereto to technical progress. ☐

☐ CS DA DE EL EN ES ET FI FR HU
IT LT LV MT NL PL ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Commission Directive 2007/17/EC of 22 March 2007 amending Council Directive 76/768/EEC, concerning cosmetic products, for the purposes of adapting Annexes III and VI thereto to technical progress. ☐

☐ CS DA DE EL EN ES ET FI FR HU
IT LT LV MT NL PL ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Commission Directive 2007/1/EC of 29 January 2007 amending Council Directive 76/768/EEC, concerning cosmetic products, for the purposes of adapting Annex II thereto to technical progress. ☐

CS DA DE EL EN ES ET FI FR HU
IT LT LV MT NL PL ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Commission Directive 2006/78/EC of 29 September 2006 amending Council Directive 76/768/EEC, concerning cosmetic products, for the purposes of adapting Annex II thereto to technical progress. ☐

CS DA DE EL EN ES ET FI FR HU
IT LT LV MT NL PL ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Technical adaptations and amendments already laboured into the consolidated text (not exhaustive)

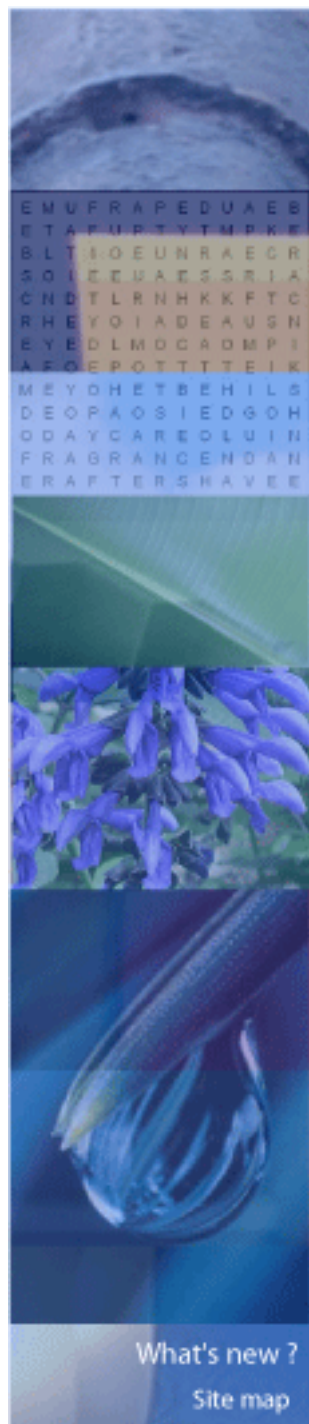
Twenty-Fourth Commission Directive 2000/6/EC of 29 February 2000 adapting to technical progress Annexes II, III, VI and VII to Council Directive 76/768/EEC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to cosmetic products ☐

DA DE EL EN ES FI FR IT NL ☐ PT ☐ SV

Twenty-Fifth Commission Directive 2000/11/EC of 10 March 2000 adapting to technical progress Annex II to Council Directive 76/768/EEC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to cosmetic products ☐

DA DE EL EN ES FI FR IT NL ☐ PT ☐ SV

Commission Directive 2000/41/EC of 19 June 2000 postponing



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Site map

for the second time the date of entry into force of the marketing ban provided for in Article 4(1)(i) of Council Directive 76/768/EEC ☐

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Twenty-Sixth Commission Directive 2002/34/EC of 15 April 2002 adapting to technical progress Annexes II, III and VII to Council Directive 76/768/EEC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to cosmetic products ☐

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Corrigendum to the twenty-sixth Commission Directive 2002/34/EC of 15 April 2002 adapting to technical progress Annexes II, III and VII to Council Directive 76/768/EEC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to cosmetic products ☐

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[DE](#) [Other corrigendum](#)

Other Corrigendum to the Twenty-sixth Commission Directive 2002/34/EC of 15 April 2002 adapting to technical progress Annexes II, III and VII to Council Directive 76/748/EEC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to cosmetic products ☐

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Commission Directive 2003/1/EC of 6 January 2003 adapting to technical progress Annex II to Council Directive 76/768/EEC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to cosmetic products ☐

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Commission Directive 2003/16/EC of 19 February 2003 adapting to technical progress Annex III to Council Directive 76/768/EEC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to cosmetic products ☐

[DA](#) [DE](#) [EL](#) [EN](#) [ES](#) [FI](#) [FR](#) [IT](#) [NL](#) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Directive 2003/15/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of 27 February 2003 amending Council Directive 76/768/EEC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to cosmetic products ☐

[DA](#) [DE](#) [EL](#) [EN](#) [ES](#) [FI](#) [FR](#) [IT](#) [NL](#) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Commission Directive 2003/80/EC of 5 September 2003

establishing a symbol indicating the durability of cosmetic products in Annex VIIIa to Council Directive 76/768/EEC ☐

DA DE EL EN ES FI FR IT NL ☐ PT ☐ SY

Corrigendum to the Commission Directive 2003/80/EC of 5 September 2003 establishing a symbol indicating the durability of cosmetic products in Annex VIIIa to Council Directive 76/768/EEC ☐

EN

Commission Directive 2003/83/EC of 24 September 2003 adapting to technical progress Annexes II, III and VI to Council Directive 76/768/EEC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to cosmetic products ☐

DA DE EL EN ES FI FR IT NL ☐ PT ☐ SY

Corrigendum to the Commission Directive 2003/83/EC of 24 September 2003 adapting to technical progress Annexes II, III and VI to Council Directive 76/768/EEC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to cosmetic products ☐

DE EN FI IT ☐ PT ☐ SY

Commission Directive 2004/87/EC of 7 September 2004 amending Council Directive 76/768/EEC, concerning cosmetic products, for the purpose of adapting Annex III thereto to technical progress ☐

CS DA DE EL EN ES ET FI FR HU
IT LT LV MT NL PL ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Commission Directive 2004/88/EC of 7 September 2004 amending Council Directive 76/768/EEC concerning cosmetic products for the purpose of adapting Annex III thereto to technical progress (musk xylene, musk ketone) ☐

CS DA DE EL EN ES ET FI FR HU
IT LT LV MT NL PL ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Corrigendum to the Commission Directive 2004/88/EC of 7 September 2004 amending Council Directive 76/768/EEC concerning cosmetic products for the purpose of adapting Annex III thereto to technical progress (musk xylene, musk ketone) ☐

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ES ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
☐ ☐ ☐ MT ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Commission Directive 2004/94/EC of 15 September 2004 amending Council Directive 76/768/EEC as regards Annex IX ☐

CS	DA	DE	EL	EN	ES	ET	FI	FR	HU
IT	LT	LV	MT	NL	PL	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Commission Directive 2004/93/EC of 21 September 2004 amending Council Directive 76/768/EEC for the purpose of adapting its Annexes II and III to technical progress ☐

CS	DA	DE	EL	EN	ES	ET	FI	FR	HU
IT	LT	LV	MT	NL	PL	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Commission Directive 2005/9/EC of 28 January 2005 amending Council Directive 76/768/EEC, concerning cosmetic products, for the purposes of adapting Annex VII thereto to technical progress (Benzoic acid, 2-[-4-(diethylamino)-2-hydroxybenzoyl]-, hexylester) ☐

CS	DA	DE	EL	EN	ES	ET	FI	FR	HU
IT	LT	LV	MT	NL	PL	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Corrigendum to the Commission Directive 2004/93/EC of 21 September 2004 amending Council Directive 76/768/EEC for the purpose of adapting its Annexes II and III to technical progress (15 April 2005) ☐

CS	DA	DE	EL	EN	ES	ET	FI	FR	HU
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Corrigendum to the Commission Directive 2004/93/EC of 21 September 2004 amending Council Directive 76/768/EEC for the purpose of adapting its Annexes II and III to technical progress (18 August 2005) ☐

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Commission Directive 2005/42/EC of 20 June 2005 amending Council Directive 76/768/EEC, concerning cosmetic products, for the purposes of adapting Annexes II, IV and VI thereto to technical progress ☐

CS	DA	DE	EL	EN	ES	ET	FI	FR	HU
IT	LT	LV	MT	NL	PL	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Commission Directive 2005/52/EC of 9 September 2005

amending Council Directive 76/768/EEC, concerning cosmetic products, for the purposes of adapting Annex III thereto to technical progress ☐

CS	DA	DE	EL	EN	ES	ET	FI	FR	HU
IT	LT	LV	MT	NL	PL	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Commission Directive 2005/80/EC of 21 November 2005 amending Council Directive 76/768/EEC, concerning cosmetic products, for the purposes of adapting Annexes II and III thereto to technical progress ☐

CS	DA	DE	EL	EN	ES	ET	FI	FR	HU
IT	LT	LV	MT	NL	PL	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Commission Directive 2006/65/EC of 19 July 2006 amending Council Directive 76/768/EEC, concerning cosmetic products, for the purpose of adapting Annexes II and III thereto to technical progress. ☐

CS	DA	DE	EL	EN	ES	ET	FI	FR	HU
IT	LT	LV	MT	NL	PL	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

☐ European Commission - Enterprise and Industry Directorate General
- Consumer goods - Cosmetics - Last update : 24/4/2007